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## CROFTON CROKER'S FAIRY LEGENDS.\*

What a strange, wild, eccentric, and superstitious people we Irish are!—abounding in legends and stories, which, no matter how extraordinary or improbable, meet with implicit belief. With us every ruin has its fearful story and its "wonderful spirit"—every green and mossy mound its race of fairies, or *good people*—every well, its cure and charm—every lone glen, its blood-freezing tale of midnight murder, and every lake its legend of enchantment or witchcraft. Here, if all is to be believed which is told us, *poochas*, ghosts, and evil spirits, are perpetually playing their mischievous pranks, and there is hardly one amongst the peasantry but has had his adventure, which if pressed he will relate, with many a "bless me sowl," and fearful shrug of the shoulder. From all and every one of those tellers of stories who have entered the field of Irish legendary fiction, or attempted to delineate the feats and frolics of the fairy tribes who in olden time were wont to disport themselves over the green hills and vallies of this our Emerald Isle, it must be admitted Crofton Croker has "borne off the bell," that he is the greatest *story-teller* in Great Britain is admitted by all; and however questionable such a character might be considered by the cold-blooded natives of our sister island, there can be no question, that in this land of saints and sinners, one could not confer upon him a recommendation which would prove a readier passport, or give him a better introduction to every class of the community, from the inhabitants of the ancient palace of kings, to those of the mud-walled cabin at the side of a ditch. In the little volume before us we have his three large tomes, which we believe originally cost two or three guineas, compressed into one which costs only five shillings: and who would not give five shillings for such a volume? The stories are arranged under the following heads, which may be considered as a kind of classification of the various descriptions of these wonder-working spirits, who at one period were thought by the people of Ireland to have such an influence in the direction or superintendence of their affairs: The Shefro; The Cluricaune; The Banshee; The Phooka; Thierna na Oge; The Merrow; The Dullahan; The Fir Darrig. To these are appended several other stories, under the title of "Treasure Legends," or "Rocks and Stones." As a finale to each chapter, Mr. Croker has appended a short description of the particular fairy who figures in the story. From these we select the following, as affording the reader some insight into the character and habits of these celebrated little personages.

The name Shefro (variously written *Šia šraž*, *Šičbrož*, *Šičbrož*, *Šiožbrož*, *Šiožbruž*, &c.) by which the foregoing section is distinguished, literally signifies a fairy house or mansion, and is adopted as a general name for the Elves who are supposed to live in troops or communities, and were popularly supposed to have castles or mansions of their own.—See *Stewart's Popular Superstitions of the Highlands*, 1823, pp. 90, 91, &c.

"The Irish," according to the Rev. James Hely's translation of O'Flaherty, "call these *Sidhe*, aerial spirits or phantoms, because they are seen to come out of pleasant hills, where the common people imagine they reside, which fictitious habitations are called by us *Sidhe* or *Siodha*."

The main point of distinction between the Cluricaune and the Shefro, arises from the sottish and solitary habits of the former, who are rarely found in troops or communities.

The Cluricaune of the county of Cork, the Luricaune of Kerry, and the Lurigadaune of Tipperary, appear to be the same as the Leprechan or Leprochaune of Leinster, and the Loghery-man of Ulster; and these words are

probably all provincialisms of *luacáymán*, the Irish for a pigmy.

"Banshee, correctly written *beanylge*, plural *ma-rylge*, she fairies or women fairies, credulously supposed, by the common people, to be so affected to certain families, that they are heard to sing mournful lamentations about their houses at night, whenever any of the family labours under a sickness which is to end in death. But no families which are not of an ancient and noble stock are believed to be honoured with this fairy privilege."—*O'Brien's Irish Dictionary*.

For accounts of the appearance of the Irish Banshee, see "Personal Sketches, &c. by Sir Jonah Barrington;" Miss Lefanu's Memoirs of her Grandmother, Mrs. Frances Sheridan, (1824.) p. 32; "The memoirs of Lady Fanshawe," (quoted by Sir Walter Scott in a note on "The Lady of the Lake,") &c.

Sir Walter Scott terms the belief in the appearance of the Banshee, "one of the most beautiful" of the leading superstitions of Europe. In his "Leters on Demonology," he says that "several families of the Highlands of Scotland anciently laid claim to the distinction of an attendant spirit, who performed the office of the Irish Banshee," and particularly refers to the supernatural cries and lamentations which foreboded the death of the gallant Mac Lean, of Lochbui.

The *Pouke* or *Phooka*, as the word is pronounced, means, in plain terms, the Evil One. "Playing the puck," a common Anglo-Irish phrase, is equivalent to "playing the devil." Much learning has been displayed in tracing this word through various languages, vide *Quarterly Review* [vol. xxii.] &c. The commentators on Shakspeare derive the beautiful and frolicsome Puck of the Midsummer Night's Dream from the mischievous Pouke.—Vide Drayton's *Nymphidia*.

The Irish Phooka, in its nature, perfectly resembles the *Mahr*; and we have only to observe, that there is a particular German tradition of a spirit, which sits among reeds and alder bushes; and which, like the Phooka, leaps upon the back of those who pass by in the night, and does not leave them till they faint and fall to the earth.

## THE BROTHERS GAIMM.

The Irish *Merrow*, correctly written *mořuāđ* or *mořuāc*, answers exactly to the English Mermaid, being compounded of *muř*, the Sea, and *Olž*, a maid. It is also used to express a sea-monster, like the Armoric and Cornish *Morkuch*, to which it evidently bears analogy.

Dullahan or Dulachan (*duđlačal*) signifies a dark sulen person. The word *Durrachan* or *Dullahan*, by which in some places the goblin is known, has the same signification. It comes from *Dorr* or *Durr*, anger, or *Durrach*, malicious, fierce, &c.—*M.S. communication from the late Mr. Edward O'Reilly*.

The correctness of this last etymology may be questioned, as *duđ* black, is evidently a component part of the word.

The Death Coach, or Headless Coach and Horses, is called in Ireland "*Coach a bower*;" and its appearance is generally regarded as a sign of death, or an omen of some misfortune.

"The people of Basse Bretagne believe, that when the death of any person is at hand, a hearse drawn by skeletons (which they call *carriquet au nankou*), and covered with a white sheet, passes by the house where the sick person lies and the creaking of the wheels may be plainly heard."—*Journal des Sciences*, 1826, communicated by Dr. William Grimm.

Fir Darrig, correctly written *šeař Deařž*, means the red man, and is a member of the fairy community of Ireland, who bears a strong resemblance to the Shakspearian Puck, or Robin Goodfellow. Like that merry goblin, his delight is in mischief and mockery; and this Irish spirit is doubtless the same as the Scottish *Red Cap*; which a writer in the *Quarterly Review* (No XLIV. p. 358), tracing national analogies, asserts is the Robin Hood

\* *Fairy Legends and Traditions of the South of Ireland*. London: John Murray, Dublin: W. F. Wakeman.

of England, and the Saxon spirit Hudkin or Hodeken, so called from the hoodakin or little hood wherein he appeared—a spirit similar to the Spanish Duende. The Fir Darrig has also some traits of resemblance in common with the Scotch Brownie, the German Kobold (particularly the celebrated one, Hinzelman), the English Hobgoblin (Milton's "Lubber Fiend"), and the Follet of Gervase of Tilbury."

The stories in our present number we select not so much for being the best, but for best suiting the limited space of our little publication. In reference to other stories in the work, we may observe, that in his pruning for the present edition, it had been well if Mr. Croker had left out some of those passages, which will go far to strengthen religious superstitions, and which, we have no doubt, will be considered highly objectionable by a particular class of our readers.

#### "THE LORD OF DUNKERRON.

The lord of Dunkerron\*—O'Sullivan More,  
Why seeks he at midnight the sea-beaten shore?  
His bark lies in haven, his hounds are asleep;  
No foes are abroad on the land or the deep.

Yet nightly the lord of Dunkerron is known  
On the wild shore to watch and to wander alone;  
For a beautiful spirit of ocean, 'tis said,  
The lord of Dunkerron would win to his bed.

When, by moonlight, the waters were hush'd to repose,  
That beautiful spirit of ocean arose;  
Her hair, full of lustre, just floated and fell  
O'er her bosom, that heav'd with a billowy swell.

Long, long had he lov'd her—long vainly essay'd  
To lure from her dwelling the coy ocean maid;  
And long had he wander'd and watch'd by the tide,  
To claim the fair spirit O'Sullivan's bride!

The maiden she gazed on the creature of earth,  
Whose voice in her breast to a feeling gave birth;  
Then smiled; and, abashed as a maiden might be,  
Looking down, gently sank to her home in the sea.

Though gentle that smile, as the moonlight above,  
O'Sullivan felt 'twas the dawning of love;  
And hope came on hope, spreading over his mind,  
Like the eddy of circles her wake left behind.

The lord of Dunkerron he plunged in the waves,  
And sought through the fierce rush of waters, their  
caves;

The gloom of whose depth studded over with spars,  
Had the glitter of midnight when lit up by stars.

Who can tell or can fancy the treasures that sleep  
Intombed in the wonderful womb of the deep?  
The pearls and the gems, as if valueless, thrown  
To lie 'mid the sea-wrack concealed and unknown.

Down, down went the maid—still the chieftain pursued;  
Who flies must be followed ere she can be wooed.  
Untempted by treasures, unawed by alarms,  
The maiden at length he has clasped in his arms!

They rose from the deep by a smooth-spreading strand,  
Whence beauty and verdure stretch'd over the land.  
'Twas an isle of enchantment! and lightly the breeze,  
With a musical murmur, just crept through the trees.

The haze-woven shroud of that newly born isle,  
Softly faded away, from a magical pile,  
A palace of crystal, whose bright-beaming sheen  
Had the tints of the rainbow—red, yellow, and green.

And grottoes, fantastic in hue and in form,  
Were there, as flung up—the wild sport of the storm;  
Yet all was so cloudless, so lovely, and calm,  
It seemed but a region of sunshine and balm.

'Here, here shall we dwell in a dream of delight,  
Where the glories of earth and of ocean unite!

\* The remains of Dunkerron Castle are distant about a mile from the village of Kenmare, in the county of Kerry. It is recorded to have been built, in 1596, by Owen O'Sullivan More. (More is merely an epithet signifying the Great.)

Yet, loved son of earth! I must from thee away;  
There are laws which e'en spirits are bound to obey!

'Once more must I visit the chief of my race,  
His sanction to gain ere I meet thy embrace.  
In a moment I dive to the chambers beneath:  
One cause can detain me—one only—'tis death!

They parted in sorrow, with vows true and fond;  
The language of promise had nothing beyond.  
His soul all on fire, with anxiety burns:  
The moment is gone—but no maiden returns.

What sounds from the deep meet his terrified ear—  
What accents of rage and of grief does he hear?  
What sees he? what change has come over the flood—  
What tinges its green with a jetty of blood?

Can he doubt what the gush of warm blood would explain?  
That she sought the consent of her monarch in vain!  
For see all around him, in white foam and froth,  
The waves of the ocean boil up in their wrath!

The palace of crystal has melted in air,  
And the dies of the rainbow no longer are there;  
The grottoes with vapour and clouds are o'ercast,  
The sunshine is darkness—the vision has past!

Loud, loud was the call of his serfs for their chief;  
They sought him with accents of wailing and grief:  
He heard, and he struggled—a wave to the shore,  
Exhausted and faint bears O'Sullivan More!

#### LOCOMOTIVE ENGINES ON THE DUBLIN AND KINGSTOWN RAILWAY.

In a former number of our Journal, while describing the line of railway, we took occasion incidentally to notice, that there had been six Locomotive Engines built expressly for the company here—three by Messrs. Forrester and Co., of Liverpool, and three by Messrs. Sharpe, Roberts, and Co., of Manchester. The engraving in our present number gives a correct representation of one of those manufactured by the latter house. For the following description of the engine we are indebted to Mr. E. Heyden, to whom we would take this opportunity of expressing our acknowledgments for several other communications and drawings of an interesting character.

Before describing the Locomotive Engine itself, it may be necessary, for the sake of those readers who have not had an opportunity of seeing a railway, to premise that the engine does not move by means of a line of cogs and corresponding cogged wheel, which is the generally received opinion of persons who have not had an opportunity of seeing a Locomotive at work, but is propelled by the adhesion caused by its own weight on the rail, which pressure of adhesion must be more than the exact power necessary to move the train of attached carriages; otherwise, although the engine may be set to work, it will not move forward. If, for instance, an over-proportionate train of coaches be attached to the engine when set in motion, the steam-power will, in some degree, raise the engine; the wheels will then slip or revolve without moving the machine, and so continue until either an additional weight be placed over the wheels of the engine, or the train of carriages be made less.—Each engine may be estimated at about ten tons weight, and is calculated to draw a train of carriages from sixty to eighty tons weight, at the rate of twenty miles per hour: each railway coach may be estimated at two and a half or three tons; they are fourteen feet long by six feet wide, and are capable of accommodating according to the different classes, eighteen, twenty-four, and thirty-five persons respectively, beside luggage.

In order to explain why the engine is capable of propelling so great a weight at the rapid speed we have mentioned, although in a former number we have endeavoured to describe the construction of the road or plane upon which the vehicles move, it may be necessary here again to observe—first—that a railway is nothing more than a common road, made as nearly level and straight as possible, upon which are laid two or more lines of wrought iron tracks set in stone blocks, upon which the wheels of a coach or other machine may move with a degree of steadiness and facility. \* Second—that the rail